

**IN THIS ISSUE . . .**

RIODICALS  
DING ROOM

<b>WEAK MUSCLES IN CORPORATE PUBLIC RELATIONS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>Joseph P. Lyford</i>	
<b>DEALING WITH THE WHITE HOUSE.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<i>An Interview with Pierre Salinger</i>	
<b>BUSINESS AND THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<i>A. Cyril Daldy</i>	
<b>THINK SMALL FOR THE BIG SLICKS.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<i>Walter Henry Nelson</i>	
<b>EXECUTIVE TALENT AND DEMOCRATIC DECISIONS.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<i>Robert E. Knittel</i>	

**REGULAR FEATURES: IN AND ABOUT THIS ISSUE, 3/BOOK  
REVIEWS, 34.**

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## AN ANNOUNCEMENT TO OUR READERS

With the merger of the American Public Relations Association and the Public Relations Society of America, *The Quarterly Review of Public Relations* becomes an independent publication.

*The Quarterly Review* was established in 1955 by the American Public Relations Association, and was furnished to all of its members as part of the membership privileges. From the start, however, *The Quarterly Review* (originally known as *pr*) had an outside subscription list which approximated the APRA membership in size. In 1959 the PR Review Publishing Corporation was organized to continue the magazine, with APRA holding 50% of the stock. Before dissolving, the APRA sold this interest to the Corporation.

Further, an arrangement was made by APRA whereby all members in good standing as of June 30 will continue to receive *The Quarterly Review* for the balance of 1961 without additional charge. Thereafter, the magazine will be obtainable by annual subscription only.

We are grateful to President H. Walton Cloke and the APRA Board of Directors for fostering this publishing venture. And we are appreciative of the friendly interest of President Harold B. Miller and the PRSA Board of Directors and their encouragement of this arrangement. Finally, we thank our many readers who have taken the trouble to urge us to persist.

As the first and only American quarterly devoted solely to public relations we have only one objective: to serve and advance the field of public relations. How well we shall succeed will depend upon your continued interest and support. •

The diagnosis of "Weak Muscles in Corporate Public Relations" (page 4) was originally a position paper for a seminar discussion of the corporation in public affairs at the last American Public Relations Association convention in Atlantic City in May. It stimulated so much thought and expression that the attendants didn't get to bed until 2 AM. The editors thus have a time interest measurement as well as topical rationale for their belief that the article presents a challenge all readers of *The Quarterly Review* will want to consider.

The author, **Joseph P. Lyford**, is public information officer of the Fund for the Republic. Mr. Lyford draws upon wide experience in observing and sometimes guiding the participation of the corporate community in social and political action.

\* \* \*

"Dealing With the White House" (page 9), an exclusive interview with **Pierre Salinger**, has one intent: better relations between public relations practitioners and the office of the President. From the answers given by the President's Press Secretary it is clear that the White House recognizes the growing stature of public relations. We shall all watch with interest the efforts at cooperation which Mr. Salinger promises for the future.

Pierre Salinger is a former San Francisco newspaperman. In 1955 he joined the ill-fated Collier's Magazine just long enough to get acquainted with Robert Kennedy. Upon Collier's demise he joined the Labor Rackets Committee and in 1959 was named press secretary to Candidate John F. Kennedy. (For another facet of Mr. Salinger's magazine career, see page 26).

The interview was conducted in Mr. Salinger's White House office on July 10 by Editor **Howard P. Hudson**. We are grateful to **Robert E. Williamson**, Washington Manager of Radio Reports, Inc., for operating the tape recording equipment used in the interview.

\* \* \*

Well recognized as to importance, yet often neglected or mishandled, industry-school cooperation is a highly specialized field in public relations. One of the top experts is **A. Cyril Daldy**, author of "Business and the School

Curriculum" (page 16). Mr. Daldy is assistant to the director of the public relations department of the Sun Oil Company in Philadelphia. Born in Rumford, Essex in England, he is a graduate of Oxford. He began his career in the petroleum industry in 1922 with the Shell Petroleum Corporation, and during WW II served as assistant director of foreign refining in the Petroleum Administration for War. Mr. Daldy joined Sun in 1946 and for ten years was manager of college and school service. He planned and directed the construction of Sun's oil exhibit in the Franklin Institute, and was a member of the committee which set up the Business-Industry Section of the National Science Teachers Association.

\* \* \*

To all public relations practitioners aiming at story placements in the large national magazines, "Think Small for the Big Slicks" (page 21) is a mine of valuable information. Author **Walter Henry Nelson** writes from both the points of view of a public relations man and a successful free lance writer who has written for the Saturday Evening Post, Atlantic, Coronet and many others. He is now a member of Fred Rosen Associates, Inc., New York counseling firm. By an interesting coincidence, Mr. Nelson also has an amusing sidelight (page 26) on Pierre Salinger, the subject of this issue's feature interview.

\* \* \*

Business leaders these days are extremely generous of their time in community activities, but many of them would be first to wonder just how effective they are. Just what can be done to make this kind of participation more useful is discussed by **Robert E. Knittel** in "Executive Talent and Democratic Decisions" (page 28). For the past five years Mr. Knittel has been with the Community Development Department of Southern Illinois University which he now serves as director. Previously he was public relations consultant to the pioneering St. Louis neighborhood rehabilitations projects. In his present position he has directed development programs in over fifty communities and seven counties, including industrial, city planning, housing, urban renewal and leadership training.

# WEAK MUSCLES IN CORPORATE PUBLIC RELATIONS

by JOSEPH P. LYFORD

**I**F THERE is a repeated pattern of failure in corporate public relations, and there is, the failure lies in the inability of the corporation to comprehend its responsibilities in a free society. It is true that the corporation has progressed from the "public be damned" era and the explosions of Tom Girdler. The corporation now suspects that it should have a social conscience, and it even worries about its conscience. However, worry in itself is hardly effective.

The plain fact is that the corporation is losing touch with most of its publics because its publics are changing in their character and their demands, and because the means of reaching those publics have been revolutionized. One public, labor, has grown more remote from management, partly because of the barriers erected by the unions themselves. Even the union leaders have lost touch with labor in cases such as the United Steelworkers.

Another public, the consumer, no longer looks on the corporation as a producer and supplier exclusively, but also as a concentration of power which will be used either for or against him. A third public, the minority stockholder, has been fairly successfully led into accepting the view that he is little more than a distant, poor relation of the corporation and that if he doesn't like the way things are run, he can jolly well sell his stock and go elsewhere. A further public, government, has been alternating between distrust of corporation motives and power on the one hand, disillusionment with the myth of businessmen's efficiency as government servants on the other.

### **Discussion of Vital Public Issues**

One disappointment and frustration all these publics have in common about corporate management is management's invisibility in the arena of public discussion of major issues affecting the future of democratic society. The common garden variety of corporation presidents' speeches about preservation of free private enterprise are not much of a contribution to public debate about real issues and real solutions.

W. H. Ferry, formerly a partner in Earl Newsom and Company, has pointed out that on such life and death issues as the arms race, our economic relationships with the underdeveloped countries, and the threat of nuclear war, the voice of the business community is singularly silent—despite the fact that this same voice is often heard at length on relatively trivial issues. Perhaps one exception to the rule is Henry Ford II who has had some interesting things to say about the responsibility of corporation men in politics and the need for polishing up what used to be referred to as a business code of ethics in the wake of recent anti-trust suits. But, even here the noises are relatively faint. It would seem obvious that the economic riddles raised by dependence on an arms economy, and the economic and political impact of a decline in American prestige abroad have a direct effect on the future of the industrial corporation. It would also seem obvious that misdirected or contradictory economic policies motivated by corporate pressure—such as the oil import quotas on Venezuela or the battle to exclude Japanese textiles—can result in national catastrophes in foreign affairs.

Nevertheless, many corporate businesses have pleaded that objective discussions of such issues are not their responsibility. This is nonsense. For the corporation board chairman is the first to jump into political and economic argument when his immediate bailiwick is felt to be threatened. The foolishness of abdicated responsibility is further illustrated by the success of some labor leaders in public debate on such issues as foreign aid, public housing, and national economic growth.

If power exists, it ought to be used. The 500 largest corporations in the United States represent the largest concentration of economic power in the world, a concentration larger than that of several nations. Corporate decisions and legislative pressures affect almost every phase of American government policy, domestic and foreign. They determine our rate of economic growth and its direction. These decisions affect our relationships with underdeveloped nations for whose friendship we compete against the Soviet Union. And let us not overlook the point that big business itself

has helped to foster the notion that it is possessed of peculiar abilities in setting national goals and policies.

#### ***Association with Intellectual Pioneers***

Another corporation failure, as significant as its limited view of its political responsibility, has been the signal lack of fruitful contact with the pioneering intellectual community. It is true that many of our corporations give assistance to educational institutions. And often, commendably, without strings attached. But the corporation's relationship to the explorer in the intellectual field is almost non-existent, and it is this area of supporting and experimental work with ideas in science, social reform, education, and political science where lies the real hope for strengthening our democratic way of life. Corporations—and many foundations—are too exclusively confined to the support of the already respectable.

This is disastrous in a free society where life depends on progress, on discovery. In a democracy, what is respectable today is frequently impractical tomorrow and archaic the day after tomorrow. In the face of this truism, the corporation is too often inclined to look upon a venture on uncharted seas with blank incomprehension or outright suspicion.

One area in which we can clearly observe the polarization between the corporate business manager and the representative of the academic community is in the federal government. Regardless of whether we talk about the New Frontier or the Great Crusade, we note a tendency of business managers in public service to group themselves in the opposite corner from the public official drafted from the university. It may not be wrong to be suspicious of campus imports in individual cases. But it is wrong to practice what seems to be institutionalized hostility between business and education in government. It should be added, of course, that this fault does not lie entirely with business. The academic man is constitutionally just as defensive about the executive as the latter is about him.

#### ***Need for Broader View***

The role which the corporation might be expected to assume in a modern republic such as ours will not be assured unless our new generations of managers and majority stockholders clearly understand the dire necessity for taking a broader look at the ways in which the corporation has become involved, willy nilly, in the fight for survival of our way of life. This is self evident. If all corporation managers had such a breadth of view today, public relations would be largely the rendering of technical skills and services. If we don't develop broader views in our corporation executives, the best public relations counsel available can expect only limited successes.

In the absence of enlightened managerial views, the public relations department or firm has the difficult job of filling the breach. The public relations man must be equipped to understand the relationship of his client to the national interest. And he must try to shorten the gap between the intellectual community and the business community.

True, many public relations people, both inside and outside the corporation, sense this responsibility. But this group is an exceptional one and its members are generally considerably ahead of the thinking of the corporation whose interests they are engaged to represent. The enlightened public relations man is ordinarily doomed to the role of a missionary, and if he is too zealous in spreading the gospel, he suffers the missionary's classic fate. Too many of the corporation public relations people seem to have been forced into a limited role in corporation policy matters, or they have been quite content to accept such a role from the beginning.

There must be an extension of the influence of the public relations counselor within the corporation—provided this counselor comes to his job fully qualified by training and experience—to the point where the counselor has, as a matter of course, access to a committee of the board or a principal administrative officer.

One reason why this access is too frequently denied is because so many corporation managers have so little appreciation of the potentialities of a sound public relations program. Another reason is that some public relations counselors, while long on techniques and contacts, are short on the basic knowledge of the social, economic, and political facts of life in which their client corporation has become enmeshed.

#### **PR Education Must Set Broad Base**

The growing accent in some of our educational institutions on purely technical public relations training, at the cost of a thorough grounding in government, history, and economics, has not been especially helpful. The accumulation of technical skills in communications on top of a sketchy education may produce successful publicists, but it is not the way to develop a public relations counselor who qualifies as a member of a responsible profession. The artist must learn to look and draw before he paints; the public relations man should know how to think before he writes or talks.

But, let us assume rising competence in public relations. It is generally true that corporations which avail themselves of competent public relations advisors—and which give these advisors status—have relatively successful public relations programs.

There have been some notable advances in the approach of corporation and public relations in the past few years. Television—a medium of which one cannot always be proud—has exhibited many superb documentaries made possible by commercial sponsors. Both CBS and NBC, through their public affairs departments, have produced outstanding cultural and educational shows sponsored by such corporations as Monsanto, Alcoa, and Amoco. Some of Robert Flaherty's greatest films were sponsored by Revillon Freres and Standard Oil. And the latter corporation picked up the tab for the telecasting of "An Age of Kings," a cycle of Shakespeare plays produced by the BBC.

#### ***Example of Outstanding PR Venture***

One of the most imaginative, effective, and constructive public relations ventures of recent years was the conference on Man, Work and Leisure by the Corning Glass Works. The conference, sponsored by the Corning Foundation with an assist from the American Council of Learned Societies, invited 25 leading citizens from abroad to discuss ways of maintaining the individuality of men in a world of technological change and international tension. Not only was this a major contribution to furthering the cause of individual freedom throughout the world—and a clearer understanding of American aims—but it set off valuable chain reactions. For example, the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions invited the Corning delegates to California to continue their discussions with leading American scientists and educators.

This one case illustrates how far one corporation can go in discharging its responsibilities in a democracy, and in making it worthwhile to its own business. Corning, in this case, is reminiscent of an excellent European corporation, the Carlsberg Breweries of Denmark, which gives its profits to the public for the advancement of Danish culture. The result is that today it is practically a patriotic duty in Denmark to drink Carlsberg beer.

Of course, I am not prescribing that either the Corning idea or the Carlsberg way is feasible in every corporation. Neither would be possible without an enlightened management conscious of its power to help society and willing to use that power.

But, let us begin to cultivate such recognition and resolve. The big industrial corporation can do much more than it has to strangle its secession or parochial instincts and to take a leading part in the search for a better world. Public relations will have earned a ranking as a high profession when it has helped achieve success in this search. •

# DEALING WITH THE WHITE HOUSE

AN INTERVIEW WITH PIERRE SALINGER

*This exclusive interview was conducted  
by Editor Howard P. Hudson  
on July 10 in the White House*



**Q.** Mr. Salinger, undoubtedly you are deluged with requests and suggestions for White House tie-ins with a variety of public relations programs. About how many such ideas and suggestions have you received?

**A.** I couldn't give you an actual figure. I'd say that we get requests like this every single day, anywhere from ten to twenty requests a day for some specific tie-in to something that has public relations value for someone outside the White House. Normally, we judge the requests on whether or not there is some demonstrable national interest provided by the tie-in, and whether or not we think that it's something in which White House participation is beneficial to the country at large. For instance, today I have a request for a one-minute tape by the President in connection with a "driving safely" contest, which is being put on in a town in the Midwest. Now, something of that kind, we could give some attention to. I think it's something where there's some value to the White House being connected with it. That would be one of those that we would attempt to try and work out. We get a number, however, that we just reject out of hand, because they have no visible national interest involved in them.

**Q.** About how many of these requests can the President comply with?

**A.** Well, the President personally can comply or participate in a very, very limited number. His time is such that it's virtually impossible for him to do so. In some cases we can get the President to issue a proclamation. He doesn't have to participate personally except in the signing of the proclamation. That's one thing we can do which can be of some

effect. In a limited number of cases he will do radio or television tapes for things like national community chest drives, or national Red Cross drives, but usually we do not go into local drives. We just cannot comply with all the local requests that we get. But there are other things that other people on the White House staff can do also, or that can be done apart from the President, where we try to work out something.

**Q.** Is there any general policy laid down by the President concerning types of program or occasions which the President is willing to endorse or support?

**A.** I'd say that the criterion that I laid down at the beginning of this interview was the one, that is, it has to have some demonstrable national interest, and we try to judge them all on that basis. I'll give you an example.

NBC has been, for a number of years, sponsoring a program called Continental Classroom which is a program they put on in the early hours of the morning. This year they're having one on American government and we conferred with the National Broadcasting Company officials who came down to Washington to see us. As a result the President issued a statement which they used in kicking off this American government program, and it's very possible that the President himself will participate in the first program in the first course. So I think that is something where you could see the value across the country.

**Q.** Well, how about some examples of types of activities for which the President's endorsement was sought but which he declined?

**A.** Oh, we get all kinds. We get a lot of attempts for commercial tie-ins. We will not do any commercial tie-ins of any kind. We've had them as ridiculous as the fellow who wanted to run his dog for public office and he had a public relations man come down and try to get a picture of the President shaking hands with this other candidate, who was a dog. That's the most ridiculous example I can think of.

**Q.** And a fine example of "public relations," too! Now then, in seeking presidential recognition, endorsement, or support of a program, to whom in the White House should the public relations practitioner send his request?

**A.** I think normally they should be sent to my office. The public relations man should define as well as possible what he has in mind and what type of participation he wants. If it's an idea that holds some appeal for us, we will then get hold of him and probably have a personal conference with him and go over the plans with him.

**Q.** In other words, if it comes to this office, it may well be that there are other assistants to the President to whom you might refer some of these requests?

A. That's correct. There are other executive agencies of the government which might have a closer interest in some particular project where they could do something effectively. For example, I could think of some educational requests we might get that we might not consider of a broad enough scope for the White House to participate in, but where the Department of Health, Education and Welfare could play a key role, and we would then refer the matter to them.

Q. Which approach is generally best, a letter, phone call, or a personal visit?

A. I think for the initial contact, a detailed letter in which the person precisely states what he has in mind is the best possible approach. We can make a judgment on the basis of a letter which is precise and which contains all the information possible, and then we would usually, if it's something worth while, we'd follow it up with a personal conference. If people are here in the city, we'll meet with them or otherwise ask them to come to Washington to meet with us.

Q. I think you covered this, but let me make sure. When suggestions are sent in do you prefer them to be in full detail or is just a brief outline sufficient?

A. Well, I think that the person should include as much detail and be as precise about what he wants as possible. It's much easier for us to make a judgment on the basis of a full request than it is a partial request.

Q. What happens to requests that go just to the White House or are addressed to the President? Do they eventually end up in this office?

A. Yes. Normally the requests will come to this office. They'll be referred here anyway, so that's why I suggest sending them to me in the first place.

Q. Mr. Salinger, out of this experience that you've had thus far, what are some of the most common objectionable approaches which have been made by people who were seeking Presidential assistance in their particular public relations activities?

A. Well, I wouldn't characterize too many as objectionable. I do think the people who try to get a commercial tie-up with the President are acting in poor taste and some of these people go to really great lengths. The most objectionable that I've found have been attempts to use the President's little girl in a commercial tie-up by sending her some present of some kind, releasing it to the press before it gets here, and attempting to get some publicity out of the fact that it's on the way to her. We have been very firm about rejecting these presents. We send them off to orphanages and places like that without their ever getting into the White House. We had one fellow who even tried to send her a \$5,000 doll house to ad-

vertise his firm.

**Q.** I saw that in the paper. I gather that in this case the story was released without your approval?

**A.** We told them at the outset that we were not going to take it. They insisted on sending it anyway and we then just sent the doll house out to this orphanage here in Washington. There are other cases which are not really objectionable, but which still give us trouble. Some public relations people who are not really thinking of the problems which the President has, attempt to get us to tie in on some regional or local matter. That is very difficult for us to do. The request has to be pretty much national in character for the President to be able to participate or take the time to do anything of that kind. So I would think that if the public relations man wanted to test a request that he had in mind he should first ask himself: Is this thing national in character; second, is it something which would be considered in the national interest; third, is it free of all commercial tie-ins? I think if he met those three criteria, then he could be sure that we'd give a very careful and considerate look at his project.

**Q.** You told us about this ridiculous episode about the dog. Are there any other instances you have that might be amusing?

**A.** Well, there was a press agent in Pittsburgh who sent us an inebriated rabbit. It was a rabbit that played the trumpet and drank beer. He announced in Pittsburgh that the rabbit was on the way to the White House.

**Q.** Would you care to mention any examples of programs which seem to have been particularly well done?

**A.** Certainly we've worked well with some of the national fund-raising agencies who have some very top-flight people handling their public relations.

**Q.** I know that you cooperate with some of the national charities.

**A.** Right.

**Q.** Any of those that you can think of—

**A.** Well, I wouldn't want to single out any of them, but I think most of them do a very good job in approaching us. We've also worked with national publications, where there's some historic tie-in that is of interest. For example, the American Heritage Foundation is bringing out a big volume on the American Indian which they've been working on for about ten years. They asked the President to write the foreword for it and participate in the promotion of it. This is something that we felt was definitely in the national interest and it's a non-profit group. So the President did write the foreword for this book which is coming out in about a month.

**Q.** You said that you have to turn down a great number of requests, of course. This must create some public relations problems for you. How do you handle these cases?

**A.** Well, we try to be as genial as possible in turning them down. I'm afraid this is one job where if you set out to make everybody happy, you'll get into more trouble than if you are just direct with people and tell them what the situation really is. I think most public relations men would rather get an outright "no" in a friendly manner than be left on a hook for two or three months thinking that maybe something was going to happen, then find out it wasn't going to happen.

**Q.** In other words, even though the chances may be limited of the public relations man getting his program used, he will get a reply?

**A.** He will get a reply in every instance.

**Q.** Good. Tell me, have you every considered distributing some kind of briefing sheet to inform public relations representatives about the way you want these ideas submitted?

**A.** Not really, because we haven't been short of ideas. I mean they come in such wide numbers that I've really not gotten around to that. We do have a program under consideration, however, in the public relations field, which might be of some interest. We've had background briefings for newspaper editors, and we've had background briefings for radio and television executives on world problems. We are thinking of organizing a top level background briefing for some top public relations men around the country about what the Administration's doing in a number of areas. Public relations men are in contact with the public all the time and I think if they knew some of our problems that they might figure out some ways they could be helpful to us in carrying out some of these programs in what is a really difficult time.

**Q.** That's very interesting to us, of course, because my next question involved this point. We believe that public relations people are often in a position to help the President reach new and varied audiences and we'd like to find out how we could better cooperate on matters involving the President.

**A.** Well, this is the way our thinking is going at the present. That's why we're trying to set up this meeting.

**Q.** When do you think you might get this organized?

**A.** I would hope that something would be developing in the next month or six weeks on it.

**Q.** And I suppose the best advice for our readers is "Don't call us, we'll call you."

**A.** Exactly. The project is in the formative stages and we're just not in a position to enter into a lot of correspondence about it.

**Q.** We'll look forward to your announcement. There's another angle, you know, in which public relations people often are involved through their organizations. This is when the organization wants the President to speak and the PR man is often the man who tries to do that. In this case should he apply here or is there some other contact for speaking engagements?

**A.** All requests for speaking engagements should be sent to Mr. Kenneth O'Donnell, who's the Special Assistant to the President in charge of his appointments. If they're sent to me, they'll go there anyway. And again, there should be some demonstration of national character, of national interest in these requests because the President's time is so limited that he cannot accept very many speaking engagements. Unless it's something of great importance, we probably will turn it down.

**Q.** What is the proper way to handle the customary greetings, telegrams, or letters to an organization at its convention?

**A.** Those requests can be directed to our office. We will not comply with all the requests, but, where we can, we'll send some kind of a greeting from the President.

**Q.** And I suppose it's helpful to provide a suggested type of greeting?

**A.** It always helps to include a suggested type of greeting. Also give us some idea of the character and membership of the organization so we know who we're talking to.

**Q.** There are some occasions where an organization feels that it might be able to provide a platform for the President on something that would be to his interest. In such a case how far could they go in suggesting the type of message that the President might give?

**A.** Well, I think a suggested message is always welcome. In many cases the President will have something in mind that he'll want to say to a particular group and we will proceed from there. Talking about platforms, sometimes there are groups that want the President to speak and they just invite the President to speak without setting a date, so if an occasion should rise where the President should want to make a speech on this or that subject which he thought would be of particular interest to this group, he could then choose this group as the forum for making such a speech.

**Q.** Sometimes an organization might have a particular report that it thinks involves the national interest and it's going to send this report to various people in official Washington. Now, in sending it to the President, would they be advised to just address it to the President and count on it being routed to

the particular assistant who might be involved in this particular issue? Is that what you recommend?

**A.** I would address it to the President and I would also have the organization find out which official of the White House was particularly concerned with that area of the responsibility and send him a copy too, indicating the President had received a copy.

**Q.** And, in such a case, would a simple phone call to the White House take care of finding out who the person was?

**A.** Yes.

**Q.** Obviously many organizations are attempting to get the cooperation of the First Lady as well as the President. To whom should such requests be sent?

**A.** To Miss Letitia Baldridge, the White House Social Secretary.

**Q.** Are there any other suggestions that you have for us? As I told you our purpose is to try to get across to our readers, who are in public relations, the most effective way of working with you. Then we'll not only do our jobs better, but we'll help you and the President.

**A.** Well, I think the point I made on giving this test to yourself is of primary importance. This will be good for all of us. •



### **Our Occupational Hazard**

"I have yet to see a company build a plant without first taking borings of the subsoil, retaining an architect who has actually designed such a plant before, and chasing out of the executive suite the muttonhead who is sure he can make a profit out of it without a plant manager, a controller, a master mechanic, and a few others that experience has shown are vital to its operation.

"But unhappily I have heard the statement—'If we need public relations, I know just the man. He has been running a grocery store but he likes people.'"

—George Hammond, President, Carl Byoir & Associates,  
*The MacKay-Shields Communications Forum*

# BUSINESS AND THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

by A. CYRIL DALDY

**T**O DAY we have almost forty-five million students in our elementary and secondary schools, or roughly twenty-five per cent of the U.S. population. Nearly another four million are college and university students. Teachers, administrators and supervisors at all levels number another two million. Yet it is quite certain that even on the basis of mere numbers this all-important audience receives nothing like the proportionate share of attention *which it urgently seeks* from the public relations programs of business and industry.

Nor do numbers alone begin to tell the story, for in our present stage of technical and economic development there exists between business and education a tremendous mutuality of interest. Business, for its part, expects the educational profession to provide an ever-increasing number of the highly educated young people for whom it has an insatiable demand. On the other side of the coin, present day teaching methods afford endless opportunities for the cooperation of business in furnishing both supplementary teaching materials and learning experiences which can never be made available from any other source.

Thus there is created for business both a challenging obligation for service and a rewarding means of contributing to the improvement of education in which it has so great a stake.

### **Opportunities for Economic Education**

Incidentally, there is also presented, in many cases, a perfectly proper channel of communication for correcting in the minds of young people some popular misconceptions about the workings of the enterprise system. This is an area which business people have commonly shied away from but in which there is positively no need for undue reticence, provided the facts are presented objectively. On the contrary, most teachers of social studies, American history, economics, and subjects such as prob-

lems of democracy, are hungry for information about business and industry which they never can get from their textbooks.

#### ***Difficulties in an Unfamiliar Field***

Although its intentions have been good, business at large has experienced its difficulties in making a fully acceptable response to this challenge. Probably this was only to be expected, for the whole idea of business cooperation with schools has been largely a development of the last fifteen years.

As a natural result, while there have been some tremendous outpourings of literature, not to mention charts, maps, filmstrips and other materials, educational authorities have frequently voiced the opinion that for the most part quantity has been more in evidence than quality—meaning, of course, conformance to their highly specialized requirements.

Happily there have been notable exceptions. Some useful pioneering has been done in the development of techniques, and today there are a number of corporations and trade associations which have for several years been conducting school relations programs of the very highest calibre. These have been widely acclaimed by teachers, but unfortunately they are still a small minority. More often the tendency has been for even the large corporation to limit its school program (if it has one at all) to a descriptive booklet of its own operations (frequently quite unsuitable for the classroom), the annual B-E day tour (sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce), the occasional essay contest (unwanted by teachers) and perhaps a documentary motion picture which is probably far more suitable for general lay audiences than useful to the educator.

#### ***Neglect by the Professional Organizations***

This is a situation which could easily be improved, and it may be useful to examine some of its underlying causes. One that readily comes to mind is the manner in which business-education relations has up to the present been neglected by the major professional organizations and in the literature.

Perhaps even more unfortunate, there are at least a few professors teaching courses in public relations who apparently are quite unaware of any particular outlet for business public relations activity in the college and school field.

#### ***Insufficient Contact with Educators***

An inherent difficulty results from too little rubbing of shoulders between educators and business people. Unlike other objectives of public

relations, entry to the schools can be achieved only by mutual consent. But unfortunately there are few regular meeting grounds<sup>1</sup> where teachers and public relations men can put their heads together and match needs against possibilities. Moreover, even when contacts are made there is frequently a lack of understanding between them.

For unless he has been a teacher himself, the public relations man is usually unfamiliar with educational methodology. The teacher, on the other hand, is often suspicious of the public relations man's motives. Sensing this and reacting to it, the public relations man—no matter how innocent—is fearful of being accused of using the classroom to grind some objectionable axe of his own.

In that kind of situation, is it any wonder to find considerable backwardness on each side in making any further approach to the other?

#### **Teachers Are Reluctant to Criticize**

As for the unsuitability of so much of the literature which business offers to the schools, this too stems in large measure from lack of communication between the parties. Too often in the past has a well-intentioned business writer embarked on the production of a school booklet, or perhaps a visual teaching aid, with little or no knowledge of the educator's requirements. The result has been no better than might be expected—something perhaps which cannot usefully be fitted into the curriculum, or is several years ahead of the intended age-level.

Thus an expensive production is wasted, while the schools are deprived of an item which might have been extremely helpful. Nor is the situation self-correcting. For lack of better, teachers will very likely accept the item if it is at all usable and do the best they can with it. The sponsoring company, meanwhile, may be blissfully unaware that it has missed the boat, for where is the teacher who is willing to stand up and openly express his criticism? Mistaken politeness intervenes, and even if the teacher is urged to be frank, he is almost invariably afraid of appearing ungracious.

<sup>1</sup> Valuable liaison is being conducted on a national scale by the Business-Industry Section of the National Science Teachers Association—the latter being an affiliate of the National Education Association. With the approval of NEA's Board of Directors, business people concerned with school relations are admitted to membership in the B-I Section (with full privileges of NSTA membership other than voting). The section holds its annual national meeting in conjunction with the annual meeting of NSTA, and teachers are welcomed at its professional sessions.

Obviously this is a long step in the right direction, but the contact is far too limited. Also, we are concerned here with science teaching—a comparatively non-controversial field in which mutual understanding and acceptance are far more easily reached than in most other areas of curriculum.

### **Professional Guidance Is Essential**

Bridges were made to be crossed, and no special difficulty has here been described which cannot be overcome—given a high degree of sensitivity to the educator's requirements and a reasonable knowledge of his methods. Informed guidance is obviously needed, and can best be obtained by the employment of a former teacher as an educational specialist. However, teachers can also be engaged as consultants, so there is no reason why limitations on professional staff should prevent any well balanced public relations program from encompassing a strong educational branch.

The potential, too, is attractive and cannot be adequately measured in statistics, impressive as they may be. For here, as in no other kind of public relations practice, there is not only an outright demand for the story but an unusual degree of permanence. Long after the press release has been consigned to the wastebasket and the executive speech has been forgotten, the teacher will still be using the same chart or handing out the same set of industry booklets as required reading.

### **Teaching Materials Versus Activities**

Specific references in this article have been largely to the preparation and distribution of teaching materials, and undoubtedly the efforts of limited staff can most easily be multiplied in that way. On the other hand, for those that do not wish to engage in a materials program, as well as for those that do, there are many possibilities for local events (in addition to the conventional plant tour) which are highly acceptable to educators and should not be overlooked. As typical examples one might mention participation in local science fairs (judging entries or furnishing prizes), providing assembly programs (talks, demonstrations and films) and assistance to school authorities in career counselling.

From the standpoint of teachers and students, activities of this kind (involving direct contacts with scientists, engineers and business people) are probably the most valuable which industry can provide. A possible drawback results from the fact that they involve considerable time and personal effort on the part of operating staff.

### **Follow These Ground Rules**

So many are the possibilities for business-education cooperation at different levels, that it is impossible to include here any nuts-and-bolts description of the various techniques which have been developed. However, a few basic guidelines can be given:

1. First and foremost, the primary objective of any school program or activity must be to make a useful contribution to education. When that

requirement has been met, it is possible that the sponsor may also derive some direct benefit. However, the needs of the educator or student must *always* come first.

**2.** In the preparation of educational materials, there can be no substitute for a fair working knowledge of present-day teaching methods and curriculum content at the different grade levels. This usually means that unless the educational specialist is also a competent writer, either an experienced educational writer should be employed on a free lance basis, or the work turned over to an outside firm specializing in the preparation of supplementary teaching materials.

**3.** No matter what the qualifications of the writer may be, each item should be prepared in close consultation with a group of classroom teachers in the subject-area where it is most likely to be used. Also, before going to press, it is desirable to arrange for pre-testing in the classroom with mimeographed or photostat copies.

**4.** Proper standards of propriety must be scrupulously observed. In this day and age, an overwhelming majority of educators are agreed that any business-sponsored booklet or other teaching aid may properly be identified with the name of its sponsor. However, no undue prominence should be given to that name or to any advertising insignia. Any attempt to promote the use of any commodity or service, or of any particular brand, is strictly taboo.

**5.** A great deal of care must be given to the planning of special events such as the plant tour. Of particular importance, the teacher concerned should always be consulted beforehand as to the special interests of his class. Members of operating staff acting as guides or lecturers should then be briefed accordingly. They should also be asked to avoid the use of technical jargon, and to bring their explanations down to the age-level of the students.

#### **Premium on Selflessness**

One final word. It should not be thought that the restrictions mentioned in the foregoing list of suggestions will limit the sponsor's freedom to the point where he has little or nothing to gain from a public relations program in the school field. Experience has shown that educators are quick to recognize any apparent suppression of the sponsor's own interest, to give him due credit, and to express their appreciation by increased acceptance of his materials.

So it turns out that in educational relations the most altruistic programs are frequently the most rewarding. •

# THINK SMALL FOR THE BIG SLICKS

by WALTER HENRY NELSON

“**A**FTER you've got all your facts assembled, lay the sheets on the floor, get up on a chair, look down at them, and ask yourself, ‘What am I saying, anyway?’”

“Then ask yourself, ‘Who cares?’”

It was Peter Wyden, a *Saturday Evening Post* associate editor, talking. We were discussing article ideas, chewing them up and tossing them aside like artichoke leaves. An idea good enough to be accepted in Philadelphia would require a detailed outline—but might result in a major article about a client in the *Post*, detailing the man and his operations in depth.

*Who cares?* Failure to stew over this question causes armies of public relations men to stumble. All too often, insufficient thought and preparation go into magazine placement attempts; the erroneous assumption is made that everyone is vitally concerned (or could be made to be) with the client, and the result is a rejected outline. Chastened and having sacrificed a number of hours to the inadequate effort, the public relations man returns to his office and to his old newspaper-oriented ways. A phone call or a memorandum can sometimes get him a business page feature and he swears he won't bother with the big slicks again. His outline, inadequate for the big slick he tried to reach, is filed for future use as a pamphlet.

The majority of public relations men avoid encountering the demanding editors of the large-circulation national consumer magazines. Exceptions are those who handle “personalities” and celebrities, and who find that the relatively easy techniques of the phone call or memo often are enough to stir editorial interest and jog loose a magazine staff writer.

There are other exceptions: the largest of the public relations firms and departments of large corporations and trade associations frequently

employ full-time magazine placement specialists, often free lance writers with recognizable by-lines. They can afford to do so because their clients are numerous and diversified enough to keep such a person busy or, in the case of the company or association, because the budget or sphere of action is big enough to warrant the expenditure.

But the smaller public relations firms and the smaller corporate public relations departments keep their personnel so busy generating an unending stream of short newspaper features that insufficient time is available for successful work with the big magazines.

Peter Wyden summed up the essentials of magazine placement: (a) referring to the research scattered over the floor, he spoke of the great deal of probing such articles deserve and, indeed, require; (b) referring to "What am I saying, anyway?", he pointed out the need of a central theme, and (c) when he asked me to ask, "Who cares?", he made the point that the central theme must be meaningful to the individual reader.

#### **Contrast in Newspaper and Magazine Editing**

Newspapers exist for the dissemination of news; everything else within their pages is thrown in for entertainment. This entertainment is not the central purpose of the newspaper; it is the olive in the drink and the relish on the hot dog: a garnishment. It matters little if the individual newspaper reader occasionally finds a business-page feature or a women's page story uninteresting. No one will stop buying the *New York Times* because he finds the "Topics" column tedious; no one turns down his morning *Chicago Tribune* because "White Collar Girl" fails to interest. The city desk edits for the masses; the city editor thinks big.

Magazine editors, by contrast, must *think small* to maintain their big circulations. Somehow or other, each article and each piece of fiction must mean something to almost every reader, at least potentially. The editor needs and sometimes has an unerring feel for what concerns that "average" man and woman.

He isn't worried about those who don't like his pieces: they don't read his magazine anyway. Few *Harper's* readers read *Pageant*, few *Saturday Evening Post* readers subscribe to *The Reporter*. Good magazine editors know their own particular readerships. The best editors totally identify with their readers and enjoy reading (and printing) what those readers like.

In the pursuit of larger circulations, the *Atlantic* editor does not raid the readership of *True Confessions*. Here, as in politics, you pick your potatoes where they're planted.

The individual reader is, then, the first and last consideration in magazines, devoted as they are largely to that reader's entertainment. News interest is less important—far less important—than entertainment value. This, of course, includes information (if presented entertainingly), for we are all interested in reading about the daily rounds of a surgeon (in your client-hospital) and of the wondrous plastic delights about to be offered by your client-extruder.

A real understanding of magazines, of their editors, their readers, and of a particular magazine's particular policies is the first essential. It is for this reason that so many magazine placement specialists are or were successful free lance magazine writers. They've learned placement the hard way, by making a living at it.

It all seems like—and is—a great deal of work. And so the public relations practitioner must decide whether it is all worth while, whether he can truly afford to devote the time required. That same amount of time, spent differently, might produce a mountain of mat stories, a snowstorm of releases, and enough clips to keep a client content for months.

#### **Benefits of Big Magazine Articles**

Yet not one of these clippings carries with it the benefits brought by a big magazine article. The latter has prestige, either because of the magazine or the space allotted; it makes for a most effective reprint; it offers vast—and national—circulation; it has a far longer life than any other medium; it affords you the best way to tell the full story, comprehensively, and finally it allows you to develop a story about any client, no matter how small, so long as his story is or can be made to be interesting.

Its believability is also greater. A recent unconscious attitude study of 6,663 persons, conducted by Color Research Institute, stated that magazines, while falling off one per cent (from 76% to 75% favorable associations), are now in first place, followed by newspapers, which fell off 10 per cent in the past year, from 83% to 73%. The question was "believability" of content, demonstrating again that magazines provide the public relations man with an invaluable tool for the shaping of attitudes.

As for impact, who does not remember what the *Reader's Digest's* article on filtration did for Kent cigarettes years back?

There are, then, many reasons for going into magazines and the thorough public relations man does not slough them off merely because the effort required is greater.

All too often, however, he ignores that afore-mentioned need to think small, to think in terms of a particular magazine, a particular editor-

ial policy, a particular reader. There is no such thing as a general "approach to magazines." The question, "Would this make a good magazine story?" is a useless and naive one.

### ***Knowing the Difference Among Magazines***

There are many different kinds of magazines and the public relations man needs to think in terms of the differences.

There are general consumer magazines (*Saturday Evening Post*, *Reader's Digest*, etc.). There are specialized but still general consumer magazines (such as *Redbook*, which publishes only for young adults). There are women's magazines, sports magazines and men's magazines. There are news magazines such as *Look* and *Life*. There are general business magazines such as *Fortune*. There are specialized magazines such as the *American Legion Magazine*, the *V.F.W. Magazine*, *Eagle*, etc., most with very large circulations. There are the big external house organs, such as *Ford Times*, the *Diner's Club Magazine*, and others. There are supermarket magazines and there are, of course, hundreds of trade books.

Each group has its own special readership. Each book searches for one. Each editor has, or believes he has, a special type of reader, interested in this and not interested in that. To interest this editor, you've got to think small again—you've got to think within his special, sometimes arbitrarily set, requirements.

Just as there are many different magazines, editors, and readers, so there are many different types of magazine stories. If your product will bear strong scrutiny, you've got a product story, such as the *Reader's Digest* piece on filtration, which aided Kent. You may have a company story, such as a recent *Statevepost* piece on Usinger sausages. You may have an industry story, particularly if you handle a trade association. You may build your story around a personality, or you may use a company or industry leader to sound off on a particular subject, making your man an authority.

### ***The Need for Professionalism***

Yet these more or less elementary facts still do not explain why some stories see print and why others die. The reason may lie in lack of story material, but I doubt it. I have yet to hear of any human endeavor without seeing a story in it somewhere. It takes probing, but it's there.

Editors are people and, as Young & Rubicam says, people buy ideas. Editors also buy what might be called professionalism.

The professional way to present ideas to editors is the way the top free-lancers do it. Unlike some abysmally unprofessional public relations men, they do *not* prepare a mimeographed memo to editors and mail it all

over hell and creation. They tailor, they engineer.

An investment of twenty-five dollars will go far. Twenty-five dollars will buy between 75 and 100 magazines. Pick any month, then buy a newsstand out. Then study. Nothing infuriates an editor more than being offered an article which clearly is not geared specifically to his particular interests.

Of course media lists are important; it's foolish to approach the managing editor of a magazine when it's the articles editor who should be approached. One must work up, rather than down, in the magazine hierarchy, unless one is fortunate enough to know the top man. Even if you do, he's likely only to thank you, then to refer the piece to the articles editor, who decides on merit, not friendship.

Getting to know free lance writers can be most helpful, though the editor may suggest one or assign the piece to one, if he buys the idea. It is useful to understand the special needs of specialized writers: some, who handle science subjects in the main, will think you most unprofessional for sending them an idea on sausages.

I know of one public relations firm which mails three by five index cards to free-lancers, mainly to the members of the Society of Magazine Writers. The tab on the card spells out a subject. The firm may handle a drug manufacturer and the tab, visible in a tray of 3 by 5 cards, says "Drugs." Hopefully, the writer touching on this topic will pull out the card when he begins his research. He'll find it contains a rundown on the company and the PR contact.

Such circularizing is useful and many writers appreciate additions to their research files. Even a general, mimeographed rundown on your clients can be helpful, if the recipient is preparing or plans to prepare a story on that or a related subject. But all this is mere "insurance." It's covering all bets. It doesn't get a piece in print.

You've got to develop your own idea, then sell it to a writer or an editor. And you must know the magazine and its special needs (perhaps from your intensive one-month survey). All too often, this knowledge is assumed, to the despair of the editor.

Similarly, editors frequently change and each brings to the job a new approach to the magazine. One likes historical pieces, another doesn't. It pays you to get to know their current preferences. Certainly, if your firm can afford it, it's worth hiring a full-time magazine placement specialist. Thinking small for the big slicks is a big job.

### Frustrations in Working with Editors

There are frustrations in magazine placement and it is wise to be psychologically prepared for them. The greatest is time. From the inception of the idea to the actual printing of the piece often takes six months to a year! Sometimes editors change in mid-stream and your piece gets drowned in the change-over. The worst frustration comes when a magazine folds.

Six years ago, this writer was negotiating with *Collier's* about a story on the (then) new West German Army. On the strength of the expenses to be paid, six more magazines were signed up for various other articles in Europe. *Collier's* folded during the negotiations and so did all the good ideas. All the time I spent with the friendly, chubby associate editor who encouraged me at *Collier's* was wasted. I went my way—and he his. Some editors just fade away. His name was Pierre Salinger. Heaven knows whatever became of him.

Aside from time, editorial shake-ups, and magazine deaths, the most frustrating thing about magazine work is that only about one in ten ideas ever see print. The magazine specialist must, then, be exceptionally creative, be capable of finding ideas constantly—and developing them all. Those which see print will more than offset those which never work out.

The professional preparation of a magazine article is a special thing and there are few ex-newspaper men who can handle it. Unlike even newspaper feature articles, magazine pieces are *largely anecdotal*, for anecdotes have entertainment value. They are the parables of modern times. They illustrate points, rather than making them. They are particularly vital in the beginning stages. Article outlines must contain the best anecdotes and most titillating facts available, for the editor wants to see the high-points of the piece he is considering. It is essential to spend a great deal of time in researching before ever seeing the editor. The best anecdotes should be accompanied by the best photographs, if photographs can be used. Full data on the company, individual, or locale should be included for background, and the outline should spell out in detail what you plan to say, how you plan to say it, what the point of the whole thing is, and why it is important to the reader. ("What am I saying—and who cares?")

It is a sales job and the outline, geared to a particular magazine, is the presentation. It should be good enough so that there is no need to go back for more data. It should stand on its own.

### Ethics of Working with Free Lancers

Meeting the editor with it and perhaps with several other good article ideas is helpful, for informal meetings often bring out other possi-

bilities. You may have looked at your client-company from the side of its new products. In talking with the editor, you may find that he's more interested in its vast community relations program. If he is, research that thoroughly—and offer your product story to another book.

Is that double-planting? If the approach is entirely different, it isn't. Certainly two magazines must never be offered the same piece with the article finally given to the one who replies the earliest. If you insist on doing this (and some do), kiss goodbye to the editor who answers slowly. You'll never print with him, no matter to which magazines he moves throughout his career. It is perfectly all right to shop around, but such shopping must be done the hard way, one magazine at a time.

The question of ethics brings up payment. The answer is simple. Ethical free lance writers will never accept double-payment, i.e., from both the magazine and the public relations firm. Indeed, it should never be offered. The idea and your assistance in developing it is your payment to the writer. Your role is that of the gal in Time, Inc.'s editor-researcher team, to assist in dredging up the facts the writer needs.

If the magazine approves the story outline the free-lance writer submits, it will probably pay his expenses as well. Magazines do not wish him to be too dependent on the charity of those who have a special interest in the piece. Occasionally, editors balk at paying expenses. If they know and trust the public relations practitioner involved, they may permit him to pick up such incidental costs. Certainly a train ticket is not a license to browbeat the writer into doing the piece your way.

Finally, it stands to reason that magazine articles should be merchandised. The expenditure of time and effort may be offset by the piece itself, but it is foolish not to make the most of the article once it is in print. Making the most of it not only means reprints; it also calls for publicity.

The fact that the *Saturday Evening Post*—or even one local Sunday supplement—did a big story on your client company is news to all of that company's trade journals, and to the company's customers. If the story is of general enough interest, it may be news or contain news for the wire services as well. Having succeeded in placing the piece because you *thought small*—because you've thought of one reader, one editor, one magazine, and a host of small anecdotes—you should now think big—and merchandise the piece effectively. •





## EXECUTIVE TALENT AND DEMOCRATIC DECISION MAKING



by ROBERT E. KNITTEL

CORPORATE executives are often asked to sit on citizen committees to plan and advise local governments on their programs of city rebuilding. Their decisions may have far-reaching effects on the city or community for very often large numbers of families will be displaced, businesses will have to relocate, and large sums of money will need to be spent by individuals for the repair and improvement of their projects.

When businessmen move into such areas of decision making, and when they assume they are making such decisions in the best interest of the community rather than of a business, they are acting in an area of profound responsibility and far reaching implications. Some have already found, unhappily, that by serving on such committees with an attitude of careless consent to the recommendations put before them, an adverse reaction is received from the citizens affected by their decisions. On the other hand, they have also found that an executive decision on their part is not what is required of them in this role.

What then, is the role of the executive as a citizen representative on a civic committee, or in any civic affair to which he has been asked to lend his support? Is it to bring in executive talent to solve the problem? Is it to make executive decisions concerning the conduct of community affairs? Is it to act as a rubber stamp to plans which local government officials and technical experts think the public should accept, and to gain acceptance for them? Is it to map out a strategy to put over a program in the face of opposition without regard to the opposition's point of view?

Whether the project is a fund drive or a city redevelopment program may make some difference in approach, and certainly business leaders are expected to bring executive talent to both. But the civic improvement project, whether it be urban renewal, a recreation program, better education facilities, or a public health program, requires an added dimension. This includes an informed, educated public that understands the decisions being made, has an opportunity to influence them, and is willing to support the decisions once made. Some businessmen will find that this

is not much different from the kind of decision making required for smooth corporate functioning. In the community situation, however, it is doubly important because the public will judge not just one business, but all "business" on the way it permits decisions to be made in the community. As a businessman-citizen, the corporate executive sitting on a civic committee is the symbol of "big business." The talents which he brings to his civic responsibilities, how he approaches them, and the extent to which he encourages and supports democratic participation in the conduct of community affairs will have a far greater effect on the citizens of the community than any financial contribution might have.

#### ***Role of Experts***

There is one school of thought that holds that the decisions affecting the community should be made by experts with superior knowledge, and talk of involving the citizens in decision making is wasteful of time and effort. However, research has shown and experience has proven that the people who are to be affected by the decisions often have valuable contributions to make from the human point of view, and some may even make technical contributions as well. It is also further evident that if we, as a democratic society, are going to improve the level of democratic participation and add to the level of values that make our democratic society possible, it is necessary to increase the opportunities for democratic participation in our everyday life. Basic to such participation is an educated citizenry, educated not only in a formal sense, but also educated within the context of day to day life. In this context, experience is the great educating influence, and the experiences that are permitted to the people of the community at large in democratic participation will be a determining influence in their ability to function in a democratic society. This ability is also a strategic item of export for our country in its role in world affairs. People who are now establishing new democratic nations are asking fewer questions about technical know-how, and more questions about "how do you function as a democratic society?" Our best answer to that question is that we encourage democratic participation from the local level.

#### ***Democratic Participation***

This means that our organizational framework, whatever it might be and for whatever purpose set up, should include instruments to encourage well-informed democratic participation in community affairs. Democracy can be more than an "O.K. word" if we attempt to follow some principles to assure participation. Here is what we mean by democratic participation:

**1. Problem solving methods which will include the use of information gathering, feedback, and discussion.** Too often information gathering in community affairs is limited to those items which tend to support the program to which we are already committed. Feedback, that is, the channeling of the information back to the people, is usually left to mass media and there is no discussion outside of the committee room. The so called "public hearing" is often considered as merely a chance for citizens to "blow off steam" rather than an opportunity for an informed citizen body to weigh the pros and cons of an issue. In a recent article on communication, Dr. Godfrey Hochbaum states "Programs to educate the public cannot afford to neglect the use of mass media, but neither can they afford to rely entirely on them for communication, for the mass media possess some inherent shortcomings and even risks."<sup>1</sup> The modern executive's approach to community affairs should include public education on these matters rather than an attempt to influence public opinion through direct appeals.

**2. Fact finding and information gathering both by the citizens themselves and by professionally competent personnel.** Surveys and studies by experts are needed, but there is also a need for the "man in the street" to become better informed by finding things out for himself. Such information gathering on the part of citizens under some guidance from those in the field, can help cut the role of dependency of the average citizen on "expert information" of which he is often uncritical, and may help reduce the general tendency to rely on authoritarian statements and utopian molding.

**3. Feedback of the information to the general public as well as to the members of the particular committee or group sponsoring the action.** This may seem a rather obvious point, but it is sometimes violated by the withholding of part of the information which may not appear favorable to the preconceived action. Again, mass media alone should not be relied on for feedback.

#### **Need for Adequate Information**

**4. Discussion of the information among all groups and feedback of the discussion to the committee.** It is very rare to find civic issues discussed with adequate information available. Sometimes discussion in large meetings is attempted but usually results in informal speeches expressing opinions on a subject, rather than on informal discussion of the facts. Such discussions need to be carried out in small groups. When community

<sup>1</sup> Godfrey M. Hochbaum, Ph.D. *Modern Theories of Communication*, Children, Jan.-Feb., 1960, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 16.

affairs are discussed by informed citizens, the results should be transmitted to those who are planning or acting on the matter. It is rare to have this happen in an organized manner.

*5. Problem solving methods which will include the use of information gathering, feedback and discussion.* The expert survey with recommendations for action is familiar to all, and these reports gather dust on shelves of many city halls and chamber of commerce offices. It is a mistake to believe that such surveys constitute the solving of a community problem. An intensive metropolitan survey conducted in St. Louis at a cost of hundreds of thousands of dollars showed the need for consolidation of services in many fields. Yet an attempt to elect a board of freeholders to tackle this problem was soundly defeated, although the need was widely explained in the press. There was little opportunity for the people who were voting to become thoroughly familiar with the problem or discuss it. Alternate solutions were not given much attention so that the weak points and strong points of each could be explored before the election. This lack of thorough discussion of the issue and inability to bring the issues to the people may have affected the outcome of the election.

In another case, when a large bond issue was being prepared for voter approval in St. Louis, citizen committees were appointed to study the needs in a dozen different subjects of civic concern. The citizen committees were truly representative and included people from the neighborhoods as well as labor leaders, businessmen, and professional men. They got the facts themselves from the city officials and whatever other sources they might need. After the needs were cut down to financial feasibility, the facts were presented by citizen groups and city officials in dozens of ways. Those groups particularly interesting in housing, urban renewal, or a planetarium held special informational meetings. The bond issue passed by a margin of almost four to one. Another successful bond issue was carried out in Detroit, where citizen teams surveyed the schools and found for themselves what was needed. In these successful cases, large numbers of citizens were involved in fact gathering, feedback, and discussion.

#### **Public Involvement**

Item five relates to item four: *Decision making based on public involvement and public knowledge of the decisions and the manner in which they were reached.* In the decisions on the bond issue in St. Louis, the items and the amounts were clearly before the public at all times. With so many people involved in the committees from many social and economic classes, oral communication helped to bring the real story to the public because

someone they knew was involved in getting the information.

**6. Testing of the decisions against the reality represented by those who were not involved directly in the making of the decision.** This is generally not provided for in our democratic society unless some group makes a special effort to see that it is done. Both in the case of the St. Louis bond issue and a bond issue for urban renewal passed in East St. Louis (the first bond issue passed there in a general election in 80 years) the public was invited to meetings where they could ask questions and have these questions answered and discussed in public. Such testing must be built into any responsible community action.

**7. Action based on objective fact gathering and intelligent decision making.** Information which is useful to making community decisions must be objective. The chairmen of citizens committees should not be those whose area of activity is being studied, although such persons should act as resources to the committees. Intelligent decisions must be based on full knowledge of the alternatives for action and the probable results of such action.

#### **Sense of Accomplishment**

**8. Recognition on all levels of involvement as to what the action has accomplished and how its successful accomplishment relates to the processes described above.** Those who have been working on a project and have devoted their time and energy to it, need not only to feel a sense of accomplishment, but also to understand which objectives were reached and how they were reached. It is necessary that they understand the method by which they reached their goals, so that they may gain skills in democratic decision making and action. This is often difficult to achieve because, as Adrian<sup>2</sup> points out, power figures in a community often assume the credit for community actions which appear to have a favorable outcome. Executive leadership can help to make certain that recognition of a high degree is given to all who make a contribution to the program, especially to individuals who have displayed new or formerly unused talent in community affairs.

**9. Continuation of the process throughout the community.** It is not enough to rely on democratic methods of procedure only when convenient or when all other methods fail. They must become a part of our on-going community life. They must be practiced from day to day so that all may gain skills in the practice of democracy. If we do not practice it in our

<sup>2</sup> Adrian, Rossi, Dahl & Rodwin—*Social Science and Community Action*. Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, 1960, p. 5.

own communities, and do not attempt to make intelligent democratic action work at all times, what chance do we have of making it succeed on a national level, or of making democracy a practical export to other countries? Unless we practice it assiduously and continuously, we cannot expect it to flourish and grow.

#### **Evaluation and Review**

##### **10. Continuing evaluation as to the use of all the above listed methods.**

Periodically it is necessary to examine and review the way in which we are operating, to determine if we actually are doing the things we say or believe we are. Ideas for democratic participation easily turn into formulas which become rituals devoid of the original motivation. Today it is easy to see examples of people going through the motions of democratic participation without any real democratic participation taking place. We may help democracy work by frequent examination of what we are doing and how we are doing it so that improvement in participation, skill, and values may result.

To effectively carry out a program in a community under democratic processes requires some skill and insight on the part of those initiating it. It is a problem which requires several kinds of knowledge concerning leadership, organization, communication, social psychology and other fields. Lately, some of the universities have begun to concern themselves with the problems of the communities. Although some are concerned only with technical problems, others are also concerned about citizen participation and the manner in which democracy functions at the local level.<sup>3</sup> Some help should be forthcoming from our universities on this problem, for if our institutions of higher learning are not concerned with democratic participation we are weakened at our most vulnerable point, the education of our children and the continuing education of adults.

The corporate executive, top management, and business capital figures are living images of the way in which business and democracy in the United States appear both within and outside the country. If they can contribute to the learning and improvement of skills in democratic living and decision making in the community, they can make a significant contribution to the concept and practice of democracy everywhere. •

<sup>3</sup>For an examination of such programs in universities see K. Lackey's "Community Development Through University Extension," published by the Department of Community Development, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois.

# BOOK REVIEWS



## ● THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION

*By C. WRIGHT MILLS*

*Oxford University Press, New York, 1959. 234 pp.*

## ● THE QUEST FOR COMMUNITY

*By ROBERT A. NISBET*

*Oxford University Press, New York, 1953. 303 pp.*

## uproar in the social sciences

On June 25 the *New York Times Magazine* printed an attack on sociology ("Is Social Science Scientific?") that in subsequent issues brought down upon its author, Russell Kirk, angry charges of being a "conservative pamphleteer," a "marginal academic man" (Mr. Kirk is research professor of political science at Long Island University) and, the most awful cut of all, one who "to support assumptions gratuitous" uses "logic too often Kirkuitous."

The anger of his detractors was earned. Mr. Kirk charged that much of sociology was mere scientism or pseudo-science. He said that many sociologists were infatuated with jargon and meaningless statistics, mistaking fact accumulation for wisdom. He accused them of intending to reshape mankind for a new social order in which man would be predictable and controllable. He said they may injure such institutions as community and freedom and may bring the nation into grave peril. He stopped just short of calling them un-American.

Columbia Professor Robert K. Merton appeared for the defense on July 16 ("Now the Case for Sociology"). Assuming a quasi-tolerant, Olympian stance, he observed that the season of the anti-sociologists had again returned, now that the academic year had ended and professors were turn-

ing from talking to writing. He credited Mr. Kirk with "getting in first" this year with "the curious admixture of illogic and sentiment that makes up the creed and canons of anti-sociology."

His strongest point was this: "Basic to sociology is the premise that, in the course of social interaction, men create new conditions that were not part of their intent. Short-run rationality often produces long-run irrationality. . . . Growing recognition of this has become one of the sources of an enlarged use of sociological research in such fields as medicine and public health, social work, law, education, the ministry, architecture and city planning, business, organized labor and agriculture."

Mr. Merton pointed out that the charge that sociologists deal with subject matter they are not equipped to understand, and the charge that they are a danger to society because they provide the knowledge through which men can be molded to fit a new and obnoxious social order, are contradictory. He denied both.

Whereupon Mr. Kirk returned to the fray (July 23) to state: "Professor Merton has succumbed to the quasi-religious fervor that afflicts so many American Sociologists. Sociology is holy, holy, holy; and let him be anathema who ventures any strictures upon the study. Such is the legacy of Comte and the priesthood of social science."

This unseemly exchange might make nothing more than idle reading for the public relations man, except for one thing: To a greater or less degree his professional future is tied to the development of the social sciences.

Tied how? That is a question we in public relations have perhaps not answered as explicitly as we should. What exactly do we want from among the various wares that the social sciences are capable of supplying?

One thing we want, obviously, is the benefit of social science research in matters relevant to our practices. Dr. Rex Harlow's *The Social Science Reporter*,\* a monthly letter and this magazine's feature by Dr. Donald W. Krimel, "Scanning the Professional Journals," are both designed to serve this end.

But social science research, particularly of the classroom or the "laboratory" variety, is not the only possible contribution the social sciences are capable of making to public relations. Perhaps it is not even the most important. To understand this point, it is helpful to understand the controversy that has engulfed sociology.

The clearest statement of this controversy has been made by C.

\* 310 Linfield Drive, Menlo Park, Calif.

"Scanning the Professional Journals" will reappear in the Fall Issue.

Wright Mills in *The Sociological Imagination*. Although he and Mr. Kirk are hardly ideological bedfellows (Kirk refers to Mills as "a radical gadfly among sociologists"), their arguments are parallel in many respects.

Mr. Mills, too, lays a heavy charge at the door of his associates in the social sciences. Many, he says, treat social science as "a set of bureaucratic techniques which inhibit social inquiry by methodological pretensions." He claims that they congest their work by "obscurantist conceptions," or "trivialize it by concern with minor problems unconnected with publicly relevant issues."

Mr. Mills is himself an advocate of what he calls the classic social analysis, which, he says, has as its essential feature a concern with historical social structures and which deals with problems that are of direct relevance to urgent public issues and insistent human troubles.

Unlike Mr. Kirk, he sees nothing at all wrong with social science trying to "save the world" through the avoidance of war and the rearrangement of human affairs in accordance with ideals of human freedom and reason. But on that score he is pessimistic, for, as he sees it, many of his colleagues have "abdicated the political tasks of social analysis," embracing instead "the lazy safety of specialization."

"In the United States today, intellectuals, artists, ministers, scholars, and scientists are fighting a cold war in which they echo and elaborate the confusions of officialdoms. They neither raise demands on the powerful for alternative policies, nor set forth such alternatives before publics. They do not try to put responsible content into the politics of the United States; they help to empty politics and keep it empty."

He urges his fellow social scientists:

"What I am suggesting is that addressing ourselves to issues and to troubles, and formulating them as problems of social science, we stand the best chance, I believe the only chance, to make reason democratically relevant to human affairs in a free society, and so realize the classic values that underlie the promise of our studies."

In brief, Mr. Mills calls for "classic" formulations by social scientists of the human problems and public issues of our times. But to formulate a problem is to imply a solution, or, more accurately, an approach to a solution. So the question is, should public relations practitioners be professionally interested in "classical" studies by social scientists?

Some would answer "no" on the grounds that such works are not "objective" or "scientific." This is correct; they are essentially ideological

and political, even though written without precommitment to any particular ideology or social philosophy. Often they are in the classical liberal tradition, for, as Mr. Mills says, "In the United States, liberalism has been the political common denominator of virtually all social study. . . ."

But others might respond "yes" to the question on these grounds:

- 1) The greatest and most needed contribution the social sciences can make are ideas—ideas disciplined by facts and tempered by sound scholarship.
- 2) The body of social science study as a whole is without ideological significance, since in it can be found works that are pro or con to any particular ideology.
- 3) Public relations practitioners who presume to counsel corporations, unions or other organizations on how to perpetuate themselves in the uncertain future need comprehension of their environment and the changes affecting it a whole of a lot more than they need refinement of their techniques.

No public relations man, for example, of whatever political persuasion, could fail to profit from reading *The Quest for Community*, a searching and rewarding book that both meets Mr. Mills' demand for "classic" social study and at the same time is conservative in its political connotations. The material treated in the book will be familiar to the reader: concern about the future of freedom; the disintegration of basic institutions; modern man, uprooted, seeking moral certitude and fellowship in his quest for community; the rage for order; the response by the omnivorous State; mass culture and Big Brother; the need for a multiplicity of associations and loyalties as a basis for freedom. These have been treated before and since the book was published.

What makes it worthwhile, even eight years after publication, is the quality of the scholarship with which the book was assembled and the insights it gives to contemporary matters.

Mr. Nesbit analyzes the meaning of democracy, which Lincoln defined precisely as government of, by and for the people. But, he says, there are two vastly different ways of looking at the abstraction "people." If "the people" is conceived of as "a vast aggregate of socially separated, politically integrated individuals," he says, then "a conception of political democracy must inevitably rest heavily upon the State and its formal agencies of function and control."

On the other hand, if we "regard the people as indistinguishable from a culture, its members as inseparable from the families, unions, churches, professions and traditions that actually compose a culture" then "the State emerges as but one of the associations of man's existence" and

"the whole plurality of other associations in society" becomes important to a democratic political theory. He asserts that "the liberal values of autonomy and freedom of personal choice" can be maintained only "in conditions in which liberal democracy will thrive—diversity of culture, plurality of association, and division of authority."

Finally, Mr. Nesbit calls for "a new philosophy of *laissez faire*," one which "will hold fast to the ends of autonomy and freedom of choice," not by breaking the "binding ties of kinship, class and community" as "was the objective of the older *laissez faire*," but by creating conditions" within which autonomous groups may prosper."

In offering such an idea, Mr. Nesbit demonstrates the high service social science can perform. For in view of the present human situation, when mankind is being dashed into tomorrow by waves of change apparently too enormous and too complex to cope with, it is altogether likely that none of the ideologies that represent conservative or liberal or radical points of view currently is adequate for our times. None may be strong enough to bear Western Civilization into the next century, which is the first requirement for the survival of (client) organizations existing today.

If this be true, then the critical need is for a new dialogue—new ways of seeing and talking about the human condition—so that mankind can confront reality with instruments of thought and action adequate to the needs of a discordant world in a nuclear-space age.

In this light, the mission of the social sciences—and the uses public relations might make of them—is clear. Professors Kirk and Merton would do well to put down their wooden swords and get on the job. •

—EDWIN C. KEPLER

#### ATP DIRECTORY OF PERIODICALS

*American Trade Press Clipping Bureau, New York, 1961, 234 pp., \$12.00.*

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